

# **Fitting heating appliances and installing or converting central-heating systems in a domestic property**

## ***Guidance notes: 11***

This guidance note will tell you when you need Building Regulations approval and highlight the general requirements (such as the type of application you need to make, the amount of the fee and when we will need to inspect the work). It will also explain how to apply for approval.

When selling a property, people often find that the previous owners have not got Building Regulations approval for the following work:

- installing new heating appliances, central-heating systems and associated work,
- converting an existing central-heating system by changing the boiler for example from solid fuel to an oil or gas-fired central heating system,
- carrying out work such as fitting a new flue, altering or re-lining the existing flue, fitting heating controls, insulating heating services, cutting and drilling structural floor joists and so on.

(See our guidance note: 23 for more information on the requirements for oil-storage tanks.)

## **The Building Regulations**

The purpose of the Building Regulations for this type of work is to:

- protect the health and safety of people in, or close to, a building;
- make sure any hot gases and fumes from the boiler are safely released into the atmosphere;
- make sure that temperatures in heating systems and appliances do not present any fire safety risk; and
- save fuel and energy by fitting suitable thermostatic controls and thermal insulation to pipes and hot water storage cylinders and so on.

## **When do I need to apply for approval?**

You need to apply for approval before any work starts on site for installing or fitting a service if the work will affect:

- saving energy;
- ventilation; or
- heating appliances, flues and associated work.

If you don't know if you need to apply for approval for what you are planning to do, please ask us.

### **What type of application is best?**

A building notice application is ideal as you don't have to have full plans drawn up. You must give a detailed description of the planned work on the application form. We may ask for more information if we need to. (See guidance note: 4 on making a building notice application.)

You can also make a full plans application but, with this, we need two copies of plans and details of the proposed work. (See guidance note: 3 on making a full plans application.)

### **How much is the fee?**

The fee is based on the estimated cost of the planned work. You must give us this estimate.

Example fee:

if the estimated cost is £2000 or less, the building notice fee will be £60.

if the estimated cost is between £2001 and £5000, the building notice fee will be £150.

(Please see the guidance note on fees or use our online fee calculator.)

For a building notice, you must pay the full fee when you make the application. The fee is a one-off payment and the amount you pay is the same as the combined plan and inspection fee for a full plans application.

### **Will you need to inspect the work?**

You must tell us before work starts on site.

We will carry out site inspections to make sure the design and installation process meet technical performance standards.

Once the work is finished and we are satisfied with it, we will issue a completion certificate which will show that the work meets performance standards under the Building Regulations.

## **Conclusions**

Contractors should know about the Building Regulations (NI) 2000 and procedures associated with installing heating appliances, heating systems, and associated building work.

Contractors should tell their customers that they need to apply to us for approval.

Usually, the owner of a property applies to us for approval, pays the appropriate fee, and then asks a contractor to carry out the work. However, the owner can ask a contractor to carry out any or part of this process.

Whoever makes the application, the contractor must tell us before they carry out any work and when they finish the work.

If you do not follow the correct procedure for applying for approval and telling us when you reach certain stages of the work, you will have committed an offence under the Building Regulations, and we may take legal action against you.

If you do not get the necessary Building Regulation approval and completion certificates this could lead to problems when you try to sell the property in the future.

For example:

- it could delay or prevent the sale;
- you could pay extra costs to correct the mistake; or
- we could take enforcement action against both you and the installer.

If you need any help, please phone us on 028 9027 0650, or phone our helpline on 028 9027 0432.